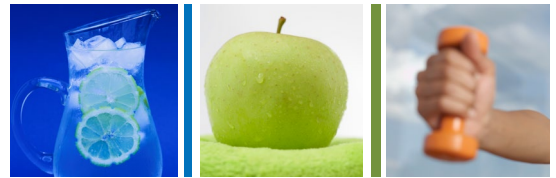


# TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

August 2015



Online exercise classes offer convenience, affordability and a broad range of exercise options for all levels and degrees of mobility.

**The most popular workouts include** strength training, aerobic fitness and routines for weight loss or physical rehabilitation. For the independent spirit, consider self-directed online fitness programs if you like planning your own workouts but want new exercise ideas.

**Another popular trend is hiring an online personal trainer**, according to the American College of Sports Medicine. Many online exercisers are doing customized workouts for more targeted results and effective use of their exercise time.

**Working one-on-one with a personal trainer**, you can craft an online training program based on your age, goals, fitness level, exercise preferences, available equipment and medical history.



Discuss your exercise needs and how to locate a personal trainer with your health care provider.



## Vaccination:

*A Smart Investment*

**People often wonder about the need for vaccinations.** Here are some common questions and guidelines from the CDC.

**Why are vaccines necessary?** They are the best defense against infectious diseases such as meningitis, pneumonia, measles, influenza and others. Some diseases, such as polio and diphtheria, have become rare in the U.S., largely due to widespread immunization.

➔ Continued on page 4.

## city events

### Saving Through Different Life Stages – Deferred Compensation

**Tuesday, August 4**

12 noon – 12:45 pm

SMT 4080

### Sleep Matters

**Wednesday, August 5**

12 noon – 1:00 pm

SMT 4080

### Saving Through Different Life Stages – Deferred Compensation

**Wednesday, August 12**

12 noon – 12:45 pm

SMT 4080

### Free Blood Pressure Screening

**Wednesday, August 19**

Stop by between

10:30 am and 1:30 pm

SMT 4096

### Paying for College 101

**Thursday, August 20**

12 noon – 1:00 pm

SMT 1650

### Best Bit: August is Psoriasis Awareness Month.

This autoimmune disease causes scaly, irritating skin patches often at the elbows, knees or scalp, or where the skin cells grow abnormally fast. It affects 2% to 3% of the population, often starting in childhood or early adulthood. Established psoriasis triggers include stress, skin injury, infections (such as strep throat), and some medications. It is not contagious. Learn more at [psoriasis.org](http://psoriasis.org).

*"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending."*

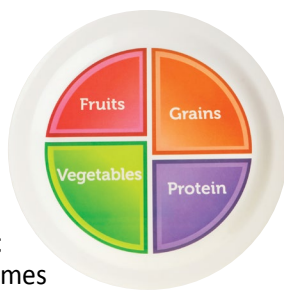
– Maria Robinson



Reach your personal best with Smart Moves at [www.personalbest.com/extras/15V8tools](http://www.personalbest.com/extras/15V8tools).

# Serving Sizes – Reality Check

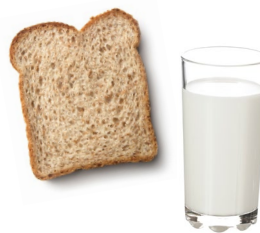
America's restaurants are dishing up food portions 2 to 3 times the amount they served 20 years ago. With that comes a lot more calories – which can lead to obesity.



**Super-sized restaurant portions** have also distorted what we consider the normal portions we cook and eat at home.

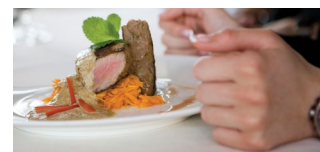
## So, what is a portion?

A portion is the amount of food that you choose to eat for a meal or snack. Many packaged foods, such as a can of cola or a bag of popcorn, may appear to be **one portion**. Many people will consume the entire container – even though it contains **multiple** servings.



A **serving** is a measured amount of food or drink, such as one slice of bread or one cup of milk. The USDA determines and recommends serving sizes to help us eat healthfully and maintain a healthy weight.

The FDA has proposed revising food labels to reflect more realistically how much we typically eat at one time. People could more easily calculate the number of calories and amount of nutrients they eat.



**In the meantime**, when you read the Nutrition Facts label on packaged food, look closely at the serving size. It may not be for the whole box or bag. **Try this easy technique:** Limit your portions to roughly the size of your fist.

# Leave Work on the Job



The ability to be in touch with work and workplace issues 24/7 is both a blessing and a curse. It's possible to get more done because information, communication and productivity tools are just a fingertip away at all times. However, the potential for neglecting personal time is high.

**Unplug and leave the job behind when you're done with work for the day (or shift).** You will return to your tasks refreshed, recharged and ready to take it all on. Strategies:

- >> **Schedule** definite hours and situations when you will not work, including checking in on a mobile device. These might include while you're in bed, during meals or during family time.
- >> **Establish** check-in times and group similar tasks together during those times, so you can do them efficiently.
- >> **Turn** off your device before you go to bed. Avoid checking in first thing when you wake up. Greet the day unplugged.

*Put work aside so you can thrive in all areas of your life.*

## body matters

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAPF

## Q: Help for hot flashes?

**A:** When the weather is hot, cooling off from menopausal hot flashes becomes more challenging. See your health care provider if your symptoms are especially severe. Take these simple steps to ease hot flashes:

- **Drink enough water.** You need at least 8 cups of fluids a day to replace what's lost with perspiration. Drink extra water before and after exercise.
- **Wear layered clothing.** If you're hot, peel off a layer or turn on the air conditioner or fan.
- **Choose food wisely.** Eat plenty of seasonal fruits and vegetables, enjoy soy or other beans in moderation, and reduce intake of saturated and trans fats. Cutting back on alcohol, caffeine, hot beverages, chocolate and spicy foods can also help calm hot flashes.
- **Make time to relax.** Studies show that massage, yoga, meditation, deep breathing and relaxation exercises help alleviate hot flashes and control stress.





## QuikQuiz™:

### Why are you so tired?

Test your knowledge of fatigue and energy.

1. Depression and anxiety can cause fatigue. ☐ T ☐ F
2. Sudden tiredness can be a sign of dehydration. ☐ T ☐ F
3. Fatigue from stress or lack of sleep usually subsides after a good night's rest. ☐ T ☐ F

#### ANSWERS:

1. **True** – The primary cause of fatigue is lack of sleep, but it can also result from stress and conditions including diabetes, allergies, rheumatoid arthritis, anemia and thyroid problems.
2. **True** – Your body needs adequate water to function well and maintain energy.
3. **True** – But if you can't account for your fatigue and it continues, see your health care provider.

**Best advice:** When you're exhausted, avoid trying to get everything done. That's counterproductive to maintaining energy, especially if you push one day and collapse the next. Take breaks and learn to say **no**.

eating smart

## Better Family Nutrition

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**Steering your family towards better food choices can be challenging.** The healthier choice isn't always as convenient as fast food and takeout. Here's how to transform your family's eating habits.

**Influencing better food choices starts at the grocery store.** If you buy nutritious options, that's what your family will eat most often – because it's what's available. Filling your cart with vegetables, fruit, whole-grain foods, fish and lean protein sources leaves less room for processed snacks, ice cream and cookies.

### Make healthy foods the easier choice:

- ✓ Keep sliced vegetables in containers in the fridge.
- ✓ Leave a fruit bowl in a highly visible area.
- ✓ Make ready-to-go containers of grapes and berries.
- ✓ Keep simple snacks handy, such as string cheese, Greek yogurt and whole-grain crackers.
- ✓ Switch to whole-grain breads and cereals.



**After a long day, it's tempting to order takeout to feed your hungry family.** Break that cycle with a weekly family meal-planning session. Ensure all family members have input so they will enjoy meals. Everyone can help shop and prepare dinner. After a few weeks, the new normal will be home-cooked family dinners that everyone can be proud of, and fast food will be an occasional treat.

### best bites Tip of the Month:

#### Put the Fun into Vegetables

A quick way to pique a child's interest in vegetables is to change their shape.

Use cookie cutters to make red pepper stars, try a vegetable peeler to make cucumber or carrot ribbons (cut it lengthwise), or make long and curly strands of zucchini and beets using a spiral slicer. Fun food often tastes better to kids! – Cara Rosenbloom, RD



### Chunky Guacamole with Baked Corn Tortillas

### EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®

- 6 corn tortillas
- 3 ripe avocados, peeled and diced
- 1 tomato, diced
- 1 lime, juiced
- 2 tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
- Pinch salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely diced

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Cut corn tortillas into triangles. Place on prepared baking sheet and bake 8-10 minutes or until crunchy. In a medium-sized bowl, slightly mash together avocados, tomato, lime juice, cilantro, salt, pepper and jalapeño, leaving it somewhat chunky. Serve with baked corn tortillas.



#### Makes 8 servings. Per serving:

165 calories | 2g protein | 10g total fat | 1.5g saturated fat | 7g mono fat | 1.5g poly fat  
| 0mg cholesterol | 17g carbohydrate | 0g sugar | 5g fiber | 52mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## News & Notes

➤ **Mobile Health Applications:** Check free smart phone applications for the City's health plans. Search your app store for Aetna Mobile, Group Health Mobile, Flex Plan Services, Delta Dental, and VSP. Once you enter your user name and password, you can find coverage, claims and reimbursement information.

➤ **Change in Family Status?** Be sure to tell your department's benefits representative if you have a family status change: get married, have a new domestic partner, legally separate, divorce, terminate a domestic partnership, or there is a new child in the family through birth, adoption or guardianship. There may be benefits implications.

➤ **Find an Eye Doctor:** Need a vision exam? Find a doctor in the VSP network at [www.vspenvisionnewsletter.com](http://www.vspenvisionnewsletter.com) or download the VSP app to your smart phone; select "Find a Doctor" tab.

➤ **Open Enrollment for 2015:** Make benefit choices Monday, October 5 through Friday, October 30. Look for an open enrollment letter in your home mail in September.

## top safety Stay Safe With the Walking School Bus

To protect children who walk to and from school, some schools and parent groups are forming walking school buses. This is a group of children walking to school with 1 or more adults.

Walking school buses make sure children stay safe on the walk to school. The program originated in Missouri and has since expanded nationwide.

**During Back to School Month,** start a walking school bus:

The school bus can have timetables for pick up and trained volunteers to accompany the children, or it can be informal with 2 parents taking turns walking small groups of children to school along a safe route.

### To create a safe route:

- >> Choose sidewalks or walking paths.
- >> Minimize street crossings.
- >> Avoid busy, high-speed streets.
- >> Avoid areas with vacant buildings, known criminal activities or poor lighting.



For information on starting a walking school bus in your area, visit [www.walkingschoolbus.org/resources.html](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/resources.html).

## Vaccination:

### A Smart Investment

➡ Continued from page 1.

**Why do we still need vaccines against rare diseases?** Despite their rarity, serious, contagious diseases still pose a threat. Some diseases remain common beyond our borders, where travelers can be exposed to or bring these diseases into the U.S.

**If we stopped vaccinating,** even uncommon diseases could return, leading to epidemics of diseases that are nearly under control today.

### Do vaccines have side effects?

Some may cause slight fever, rash or soreness at the injection site; serious reactions are rare.

**Do vaccines cause disease?** No. They contain just enough antigens (a weak form of disease) to prompt the immune system to build protective antibodies against invading germs. Even infants can tolerate the tiny amounts of antigen needed for protection.

...➤ Vaccination needs change periodically, so consult your health care provider. How about during August, **National Immunization Awareness Month?** Learn more at [cdc.gov/vaccines](http://cdc.gov/vaccines).



expert advice

— Eric Endlich, PhD

### Q: Food-mood link?

**A:** What and when you eat can affect how you feel. To feel more content and less moody:

Eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit daily – they supply key nutrients that support mood.

**Keep your blood sugar even** by eating on schedule and not skipping meals (especially breakfast). Replace simple carbohydrates (sweets, soft drinks) with whole grains, beans and vegetables to boost brain serotonin, which may calm you and improve sleep.

**Consume quality proteins** such as eggs, chicken or fish for improved focus.

**Get heart-protective, omega-3 fats** from fish, flax seeds and walnuts; they may improve brain function and ease depression.

**Stay hydrated** with water or tea (green or herbal). Avoid alcohol (a depressant) and limit caffeine, which can disturb sleep and cause rebound energy slumps.